

## Indicator 12

# Characteristics of Elementary and Secondary Schools

*In 2009–10, some 5 percent of traditional public schools were combined schools (schools with both elementary and secondary grades), whereas 19 percent of charter schools and 28 percent of private schools were combined schools.*

In 2009–10, there were 132,200 schools in the United States, including 93,900 traditional public schools, some 5,000 charter schools, and 33,400 private schools (see table A-12-1). Of the total schools in the United States in that year, approximately two-thirds (67 percent) were elementary schools, 21 percent were secondary schools, 11 percent were combined schools (namely, schools with both elementary and secondary grades) and 1 percent were ungraded. However, there was variation in the distribution of schools at each level by school control, that is, whether they were traditional public, charter or private. For example, 25 percent of traditional public schools and 27 percent of charter schools were secondary schools, compared to 8 percent of private schools. In addition, 5 percent of traditional public schools were combined schools, compared to 19 percent of charter schools and 28 percent of private schools.

The distribution of schools by school size differed by school control in 2009–10. Some 30 percent of traditional public schools were small (enrollment of fewer than 300 students), as compared to 61 percent of charter schools and 85 percent of private schools. In that same year, 9 percent of traditional public schools were large (1,000 or more students), as compared to 4 percent of charter schools and 1 percent of private schools.

The percentage of schools where White students accounted for more than 50 percent of enrollment was lower in 2009–10 than in 1999–2000 (66 vs. 73 percent). In contrast, the percentage of schools where Hispanic students accounted for more than 50 percent of enrollment was higher in 2009–10 than in 1999–2000 (12 vs. 7 percent). In both years, the percentage of schools where Black students accounted for more than 50 percent of enrollment was approximately the same (10 percent). In 2009–10, White students accounted for more than 50 percent of enrollment in 75 percent of private schools, compared to 63 percent of traditional public schools and

41 percent of charter schools. In contrast, Black students accounted for more than 50 percent of enrollment at 26 percent of charter schools, compared to 11 percent of traditional public schools and 8 percent of private schools. Hispanic students accounted for more than 50 percent of enrollment at 20 percent of charter schools in 2009–10, compared to 14 percent of traditional public schools and 5 percent of private schools.

The percentage of public schools (data for private schools are not available) that were high-poverty schools (i.e., schools where more than 75 percent of the students were eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program) was higher in 2009–10 (20 percent) than in 1999–2000 (12 percent). Conversely, the percentage of public schools that were low-poverty schools (i.e., schools where 25 percent or less of the students were eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program) was lower in 2009–10 (20 percent) than in 1999–2000 (31 percent). The distributions of public schools by poverty level differed by whether public schools were traditional or charter. In 2009–10, about 33 percent of charter schools were high-poverty schools, compared to 19 percent of traditional public schools.

In 2009–10, the largest percentage of traditional public schools were in rural areas (33 percent), followed by schools in suburban areas (28 percent), cities (25 percent), and towns (14 percent). In contrast, the largest percentage of charter schools was in cities (55 percent); suburban areas had 21 percent of charter schools, rural areas had 16 percent and towns had 8 percent. The largest percentages of private schools were in suburban areas (35 percent) and cities (32 percent), followed by rural areas (23 percent), and towns (10 percent).



**Table A-12-1**

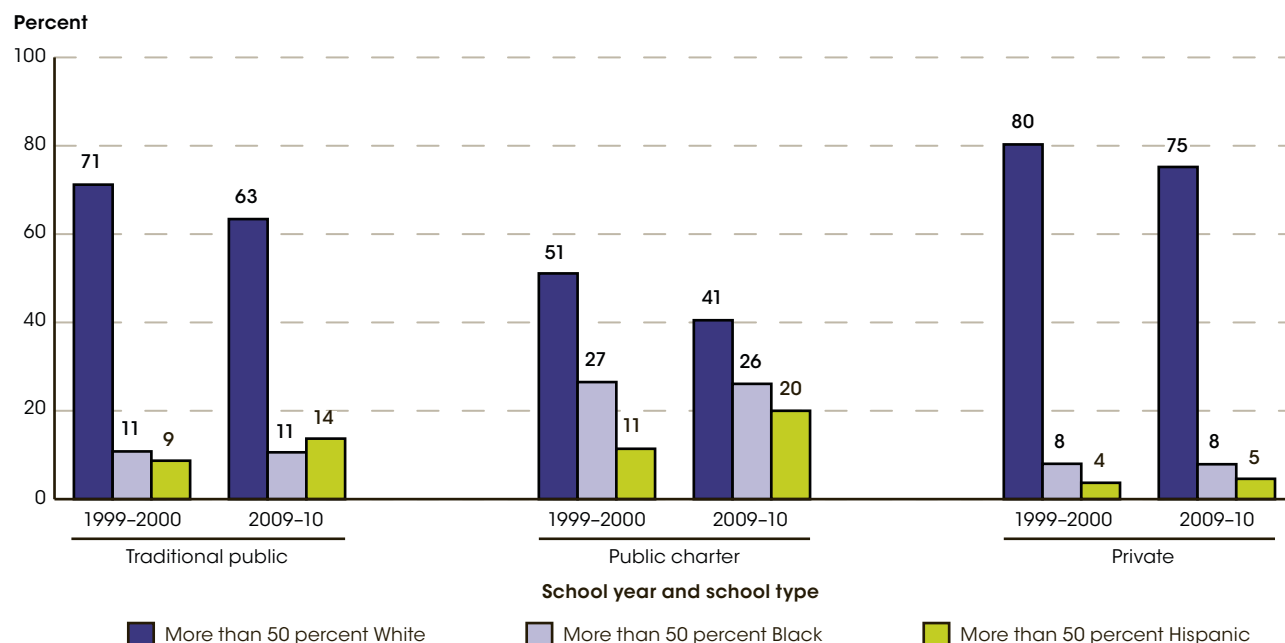
**Glossary:** *Charter school, Combined school, Elementary school, Private school, Secondary school, Traditional public school*

## Technical Notes

The percentage distributions for school size and race/ethnicity exclude schools that did not report enrollment. For more information on locale, poverty, and race/ethnicity, see Appendix C – *Commonly Used Measures*.

For more information on the Common Core of Data (CCD) or the Private School Survey (PSS), see Appendix B – *Guide to Sources*.

**Figure 12-1. Percentage distribution of schools, by control and racial/ethnic concentration of schools: School years 1999-2000 and 2009-10**



NOTE: Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. For more information on race/ethnicity, see Appendix C – *Commonly Used Measures*. For more information on the Common Core of Data (CCD) or the Private School Survey (PSS), see Appendix B – *Guide to Sources*.  
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey," 1999-2000 (version 1b); and 2009-10 (version 1b), and Private School Survey (PSS), 1999-2000 and 2009-10.

**Figure 12-2. Percentage distribution of schools, by locale and control: School year 2009-10**



NOTE: For more information on locale, see Appendix C – *Commonly Used Measures*. For more information on the Common Core of Data (CCD) or the Private School Survey (PSS), see Appendix B – *Guide to Sources*.  
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey," 2009-10 (version 1b); and Private School Survey (PSS), 2009-10.

## Indicator 12

# Characteristics of Elementary and Secondary Schools

**Table A-12-1. Number and percentage distribution of schools, by control and selected school characteristics: School years 1999-2000 and 2009-10**

School characteristic	1999-2000					2009-10				
	Total <sup>1</sup>	Public				Total <sup>1</sup>	Public			
		Total	Tradi- tional	Charter	Private		Total	Tradi- tional	Charter	Private
	Number									
<b>Total, all schools</b>	<b>125,012</b>	<b>92,012</b>	<b>90,488</b>	<b>1,524</b>	<b>33,000</b>	<b>132,217</b>	<b>98,817</b>	<b>93,865</b>	<b>4,952</b>	<b>33,400</b>
School level										
Elementary	86,431	64,131	63,299	832	22,300	88,540	67,140	64,461	2,679	21,400
Secondary	24,865	22,365	21,971	394	2,500	27,451	24,651	23,322	1,329	2,800
Combined	12,242	4,042	3,758	284	8,200	14,930	5,730	4,801	929	9,200
Other (ungraded) <sup>2</sup>	1,474	1,474	1,460	14	†	1,296	1,296	1,281	15	†
School type										
Regular	114,802	84,902	83,558	1,344	29,900	119,318	89,018	84,589	4,429	30,300
Special education	3,347	1,947	1,940	7	1,400	3,889	2,089	2,006	83	1,800
Vocational	1,048	1,048	1,040	8	#	1,417	1,417	1,397	20	#
Alternative	5,815	4,115	3,950	165	1,700	7,593	6,293	5,873	420	1,300
	Percentage distribution									
School level	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Elementary	69.1	69.7	70.0	54.6	67.6	67.0	67.9	68.7	54.1	64.1
Secondary	19.9	24.3	24.3	25.9	7.6	20.8	24.9	24.8	26.8	8.4
Combined	9.8	4.4	4.2	18.6	24.8	11.3	5.8	5.1	18.8	27.5
Other (ungraded) <sup>2</sup>	1.2	1.6	1.6	0.9	†	1.0	1.3	1.4	0.3	†
School type	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Regular	91.8	92.3	92.3	88.2	90.6	90.2	90.1	90.1	89.4	90.7
Special education	2.7	2.1	2.1	0.5	4.2	2.9	2.1	2.1	1.7	5.4
Vocational	0.8	1.1	1.1	0.5	#	1.1	1.4	1.5	0.4	#
Alternative	4.7	4.5	4.4	10.8	5.2	5.7	6.4	6.3	8.5	3.9
Enrollment size	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Fewer than 300	44.8	31.3	30.5	77.0	81.4	45.1	31.3	29.7	61.3	84.6
300-499	22.4	26.5	26.7	12.0	11.3	22.8	27.7	28.0	21.0	9.0
500-999	25.6	32.8	33.2	8.7	6.3	25.1	32.1	33.1	14.0	5.3
1,000 or more	7.2	9.5	9.7	2.4	1.0	6.9	9.0	9.3	3.7	1.0

See notes at end of table.

**Table A-12-1. Number and percentage distribution of schools, by control and selected school characteristics: School years 1999–2000 and 2009–10—Continued**

School characteristic	1999–2000					2009–10				
	Public					Public				
	Total <sup>1</sup>	Total	Tradi- tional	Charter	Private	Total <sup>1</sup>	Total	Tradi- tional	Charter	Private
<b>Total, all schools</b>	<b>125,012</b>	<b>92,012</b>	<b>90,488</b>	<b>1,524</b>	<b>33,000</b>	<b>132,217</b>	<b>98,817</b>	<b>93,865</b>	<b>4,952</b>	<b>33,400</b>
	Percentage distribution									
Racial/ethnic concentration of schools										
More than 50 percent White	73.5	70.9	71.2	51.1	80.3	65.6	62.3	63.4	40.5	75.2
More than 50 percent Black	10.3	11.1	10.8	26.5	8.0	10.5	11.4	10.6	26.1	7.9
More than 50 percent Hispanic	7.4	8.8	8.7	11.4	3.7	11.6	14.0	13.7	20.0	4.6
Percentage of students in school eligible for free or reduced-price lunch										
0–25 percent	—	100.0	100.0	100.0	—	—	100.0	100.0	100.0	—
26–50 percent	—	30.6	30.6	35.8	—	—	20.4	20.4	19.2	—
51–75 percent	—	25.6	25.9	11.1	—	—	27.0	27.6	17.2	—
76–100 percent	—	16.8	16.9	10.2	—	—	25.5	25.7	20.9	—
Missing/school did not participate	—	11.9	11.9	12.4	—	—	19.9	19.2	32.9	—
Region	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Northeast	18.4	16.1	16.3	7.2	24.7	17.4	15.5	15.9	9.1	22.9
Midwest	27.7	28.9	29.0	24.9	24.1	26.3	26.7	26.8	24.0	25.2
South	32.2	33.1	33.2	28.9	29.7	33.7	34.5	34.8	29.5	31.4
West	21.7	21.8	21.6	38.9	21.4	22.6	23.3	22.5	37.4	20.4
School locale	—	—	—	—	—	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
City	—	—	—	—	—	27.7	26.1	24.6	54.8	32.4
Suburban	—	—	—	—	—	29.3	27.4	27.7	21.1	34.8
Town	—	—	—	—	—	13.1	14.2	14.5	8.0	10.0
Rural	—	—	—	—	—	29.9	32.4	33.2	16.1	22.8

— Not available.

† Not applicable.

# Rounds to zero.

<sup>1</sup> Total number of schools does not always equal the sum of schools by level because the total may include ungraded schools and schools that did not report grade spans.<sup>2</sup> Total is only for public schools, as data for private schools were not applicable.NOTE: Schools that did not report enrollment were excluded from the percentage distribution. Combined schools are those that have both elementary and secondary grades. Public school data are universe estimates and are rounded to whole numbers. Private school data are sample estimates and are rounded to the nearest 100. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. For more information on race/ethnicity, the free or reduced-price lunch program, region, and locale, see Appendix C – *Commonly Used Measures*. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding. For more information on the Common Core of Data (CCD) or the Private School Survey (PSS), see Appendix B – *Guide to Sources*.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey," 1999–2000 (version 1b) and 2009–10 (version 1b); and Private School Survey (PSS), 1999–2000 and 2009–10.